

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the present application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain(s) under examination in the application is presented below. The claims are presented in ascending order and each includes one status identifier. Those claims not cancelled or withdrawn but amended by the current amendment utilize the following notations for amendment: 1. deleted matter is shown by strikethrough for six or more characters and double brackets for five or fewer characters; and 2. added matter is shown by underlining.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a molded woody article, comprising:

compression molding a mat-shaped base material containing wood fibers, polylactic acid fibers made of polylactic acid having a crystallinity of 30% to 50% to a crystallization rate of 100%, and an inorganic filler at a temperature not less than a melting point of said polylactic acid fibers, thereby forming a flat plate-shaped base material; and

maintaining said molded base material at a temperature close to a crystallization temperature of said polylactic acid fibers for a period of time that allows a crystallinity of 30% to 50% ~~100% crystallization rate~~ of the polylactic acid fibers, thereby crystallizing the polylactic acid fibers[.];

wherein in the compression molding step, the base material is prepared such that a ratio of the wood fibers to the polylactic acid fibers is in a range of 7:3 to 5:5 by weight, and a ratio of the inorganic filler to the polylactic acid fibers is in a range of 0.1 to 5% by weight;[.]] and

wherein the molded woody article has a density thereof is in a range of 0.5g/cm³ or more to 0.7 g/cm³.

2. (Original) The method for manufacturing a molded woody article according to claim 1, wherein the inorganic filler contained in the base material is dispersed into the polylactic acid fibers.

3. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing a molded woody article according to claim 1, wherein the inorganic filler contained in the base material is talc.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing a molded woody article according to claim 1, wherein the period of time is between 25 seconds and 50 seconds.

6. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing a molded woody article according to claim 1, wherein a crystallization rate of 100% can be achieved during the maintaining step within a desired time of 30 seconds.

7. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing a molded woody article according to claim 1, wherein said molded base material is maintained at 100°C to 110°C.